GRANT APPLICATION

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DETERMINE QUALITY AND ALIGNMENT OF DISTRICT WIDE ASSESSMENT MEASURES

GRIMES STATE OFFICE BUILDING DES MOINES, IOWA 50319-0146

DEADLINES:

Intent to Apply: June 14

Applications Due: June 24, 2002 4:30 P.M.

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age or marital status in its programs or employment practices. If you have questions or grievances related to this policy please contact the Chief, Bureau of Administration and School Improvement Services, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146, 515-281-5811.

Purpose and Intent

With the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) the need to ensure all Iowa districts have local district wide assessments that demonstrate adequate technical adequacy is imperative. The purpose of this request for proposal is to solicit proposals from experienced vendors or individuals with assessment expertise to develop training documents, organize training, and implement regional training in the State of Iowa to document the technical adequacy of district wide assessments and the alignment of the local district wide assessments with local standards and benchmarks. Although this work will be organized and implemented from an external source other than the Department, the intent is that the Department's Cross Bureau Assessment Team will assist in the refinement and implementation of all documents and subsequent trainings.

Through ESEA, the federal government appropriated additional funds to assist states in improving their assessment systems to meet the federal requirements. A refined assessment system with documented technical adequacy and alignment will assist teachers, administrators, parents, and community stakeholders in making decisions regarding the implementation of structured school improvement that impact all students. With this in mind, this proposal seeks to assist districts to refine and determine that their local district wide assessment system which includes alternate assessment, and multiple measures will provide valid and reliable data to determine district students proficiency levels for content standards. Participants will develop the capacity to implement the processes necessary to ensure technically adequate district-wide assessment, accountability and evaluation systems. This request for proposal is intended to align the work of the local districts with the guidelines specified in the Peer Reviewer Guidance for Evaluating Evidence of Final Assessments Under Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Act (USDE, Nov. 1999). Specifically, participants will:

- 1. Acquire knowledge of concepts of alignment of assessments to standards and benchmarks and instruction.
- 2. Acquire knowledge of concepts of technical adequacy
 - Validity
 - Reliability
 - Fairness
- 3. Apply concepts of alignment during training
- 4. Apply concepts of technical adequacy during training
 - Reliability
 - Validity
 - Fairness
- 5. Apply concepts of alignment to district assessment systems
- 6. Apply concepts of technical adequacy to district assessment systems
 - Reliability
 - Validity
 - Fairness
- 7. Evaluate district wide assessment and accountability systems
 - Examine district assessment and accountability systems for alignment

- Examine district assessment and accountability systems for technical adequacy
- Make recommendations for change in the system based on the results of the examination
- Implement any needed actions to produce an aligned, district wide assessment system with technical adequacy.
- 8. Continue to evaluate appropriateness of the district assessment system and implement change in that system as needed to maintain alignment and technical adequacy.

Background

Currently, all 371 local districts are responsible to administer an assessment that has both state and national norms at grades 4, 8, and 11 in reading and mathematics and grades 8 and 11 in science. They must also have at least one additional assessment measure for each of these content areas. Area Education Agencies (AEA) in the state of Iowa provide an opportunity for districts to participate in the Iowa Collaborative Assessment Modules (ICAM) at the 4th, 8th, and 11th grades, designed to assist them in fulfilling their multiple measure requirement in reading and mathematics. Currently, 367 buildings in 136 districts use these modules. In addition, students who do not participate in the general district wide assessment program are required to participate in the district's alternate assessment. This alternate assessment process will be fully implemented in Iowa during the 2002-2003 school year.

Although districts continually monitor the alignment of assessments with their local standards and benchmarks and the technical adequacy of these assessments, there remains a need for additional technical assistance. This proposal seeks to assist those districts that have a need to improve these components of their district wide assessment system. In addition to providing assistance to Local Education Agencies (LEA) to improve their local district wide assessments, this proposal seeks to build capacity at the Area Education Agencies to support the work of the school districts they serve.

Definitions

Alternate Assessment means a large-scale achievement or performance measure for those students who do not participate in the general district wide assessment.

Area Education Agency (AEA) refers to regional agencies that provide support to local education agencies.

Bidder means a person, partnership, firm, corporation, or joint venture submitting a bid proposal for the purpose of obtaining a contract.

Contract means the request for proposal (RFP), any addenda thereto, the bidder's proposal, and the purchase. The contract constitutes the entire agreement between the state and the contractor.

Cross Bureau Assessment Team means a team of individuals from multiple bureaus in the Department which advise the Department regarding policy and practices regarding implementation of Assessments and alignment of the components in ESEA and Chapter 12 of the Iowa Administrative Code.

Department means Iowa Department of Education.

District Wide Assessment means large-scale achievement or performance measures. At least one district wide assessment shall allow for the following: the comparison of the same group of students over time as they progress through the grades or the cross-sectional comparison of students at the same grades over multiple years.

District Wide Assessment System means the district wide assessment, the multiple measures, and the alternate assessment.

Evaluation Committee means a committee established by the Department to review and evaluate bid proposals to determine contract award.

Invoice means billing by contractor for services rendered

Local Education Agency (LEA) is a term which refers to public and nonpublic schools, AEAs and merged school corporations.

Multiple Measures means those measures used for reporting to the local community or the state, means more than one valid and reliable instrument that quantifies district wide student learning, including specific grade-level data.

Structured School Improvement means those components that must be in place to support districts in systematically implementing improvement efforts in their district.

Information for Bidders

This proposal seeks to secure an outside vendor or individual with assessment expertise to complete the necessary work with the assistance of the Department's Cross Bureau Assessment Team. The primary responsibility for the completion of the training documents and implementation of subsequent trainings falls solely on the grantee.

Each application will be screened for eligibility according to the requirements as indicated within this document. These eligibility criteria include, but are not limited to,

- application is received by the deadline
- application does not exceed maximum number of pages allowed
- all required signatures are properly included
- all components of the application are addressed

- applicant is a vendor or individual with assessment expertise
- application was submitted in the allowed format
- applicant demonstrates ability to deliver product and process on time and with quality

Carefully review the application for all requirements. If you have any questions, please call Kathy Hinders at 515-281-3517.

Critical Dates:

6/14/02	Intent to Apply - If you intend to submit an application for Improving District Wide Assessments, please indicate such intent in an e-mail message <i>by June 14</i> to Kathy Hinders
	at: kathy.hinders@ed.state.ia.us
6/21/02	Deadline for receipt of questions related to the Request for Proposal should be e-mailed <i>by June 14</i> to Kathy Hinders
	at: kathy.hinders@ed.state.ia.us
6/24/02	Deadline for receipt of Application is 4:30 PM (Central)
	late)Grant recipient is notified by the Department
` • •	late)Contract finalized, reviewed and signed by parties
` 11	late)Contract starts
12/30/03	Contract completion date

How To Submit An Application

The deadline for submission of applications is 4:30 p.m. on Friday, June 24, 2002. One (1) original and two (2) copies, for a total of three (3), must be submitted by this deadline. Applications must be mailed or hand-delivered to be received by or before the deadline to Kathy Hinders, Third Floor, Grimes State Office Building, East 14th and Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146. Applications may not be sent by Fax, e-mail, or by any other electronic means. No handwritten applications will be accepted.

How the Grant Recipient is Selected

The Department's Cross Bureau Assessment Team will be trained to read and score the grant applications. They will convene on July 1st and 2nd to score the applications. Based on the quality of the applications, the applicant receiving the highest score will be considered for funding. The Department reserves the right to deny funding of all applications if the articulated criteria are not sufficiently met.

Rejection of Proposals

The Department reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part. Proposals shall be rejected and not reviewed by the Department for any of the following reasons:

- 1. The proposal is not received at the Department at the time and place noted in the section titled "How to Submit an Application".
- 2. The bidder fails to respond to any part of the RFP or does not provide information in the format required.
- 3. There is evidence that the bidder engaged in unfair bidding procedures.
- 4. Bidder is financially insolvent.

Bidders whose proposals are rejected will be deemed not qualified and so notified. After evaluation of proposals and a tentative contract award by the Department, all bidders will be notified as to the successful bidder.

Contract Award

- Issuance of this RFP and receipt of proposals does not commit the State of Iowa
 or the Department to award a contract. The Department reserves the right to
 postpone the RFP process for its own convenience, to accept or reject any or all
 proposals received in response to this RFP, to negotiate with other than the
 selected bidder should negotiations with the selected bidder be terminated, or to
 cancel any section of this RFP.
- 2. The Department will notify all bidders in writing of its award decision on July 15, 2002. Any contract resulting from this RFP will be signed only after successful negotiation of contract terms and conditions and all applicable procedural requirements have been met.
- 3. An award under this RFP will not be based solely on the lowest bid. If an award is made, it will go to the bidder with the best overall proposal. The best proposal may not necessarily be the lowest bid. The successful bidder will be determined in accordance with the selection criteria described in "Scoring" section.

The award made to the selected grant recipient is intended to fund activities beginning July 26, 2002 and concluding on December 30, 2003 using grant monies received by the Department through Title I, Section 1111(D). Applicants will submit a budget that details expenditures related to the activities outlined in the Applicant Content Section of this application. The grant recipient will receive four payments over the contract period. These payments will be based upon the current level of expenditures. The payment schedule is as follows:

August, 2002	1 st payment – Upon submission of expenditures to date and a			
	progress report.			
November, 2002	2 nd payment – Upon submission of expenditures to date and			
	training documents.			
May, 2003	3 rd payment – Upon submission of expenditures to date and a			
	completed training schedule.			
December, 2003	Final payment - Upon submission of a final report to the			

Department and a project completion report.

Proposal Obligations

The contents of the proposal and any clarifications submitted by the successful bidder shall become part of the contractual obligation and incorporated by reference into the ensuing contract.

Gratuities

The laws of the State of Iowa provide that it is a felony to offer, promise, or give anything of value or benefit to a State employee with the intent to influence that employee's acts, opinions, judgments, or exercise of discretion with respect to that employee's duties. Evidence of violations of this statue will be referred to the Office of the Iowa Attorney General.

News Releases

News releases or other materials made available to the public, bidder's clients or potential clients by the bidder pertaining to this proposal shall not be made without the prior written approval of the Department.

Iowa Statutes and Rules

The terms and conditions of this RFP and the resulting contract or activities based upon it shall be in accordance with the laws of Iowa. Statutes and regulations of the United States government, referenced herein, shall apply to this RFP and the resulting contract. When differences exist between federal and state statutes or regulations affecting this procurement, interpretation shall be that which is most beneficial to the interests of the State of Iowa.

Reporting

The grant recipient must submit to the Department a progress report on the status of the work described in the application and a current expenditure report on November 29, 2002 and a final financial report on December 30, 2003.

Notification of Awards

Applicants will be notified of the results of their application on or about the week of July 15, 2002. The Department reserves the right to negotiate the award or deny the award if applications do not meet the described criteria.

Application Content—Overview

The components and requirements of the application to be addressed by the applicant follow. Each section of the application is explained in detail beginning on p. 8 of this RFP.

Cover Sheet - one page maximum using form provided Abstract - one page maximum

Grant Proposal Section - fifteen pages maximum

Budget - 5 page maximum

Timeline

Assurances

Requirements must be met by the applicant in order to be considered eligible for funding. Each of the components is explained in further detail later in this request for proposal (RFP). All components of the application must be typed, with the exception of signatures. The Grant Proposal section must be double-spaced, typed on one side only. All other components may be single-spaced, and must be typed on one side only. Font size for all components must NOT be less than 12 points. Times font is required. Margins must be at least 1" and only letter size (8.5 x 11 inch) is acceptable. No covers, binders, or notebooks will be accepted. The applicant must submit one (1) original and two (2) copies for a total of three (3) copies of the application. Staple the original and each of the two copies in the upper left corner. Submit the original and copies together, bound with a rubber band.

Additional Resources Available to the Applicant

The applicant may want to consider technical assistance documents related to district wide assessment that have been developed by the Department. These documents may be accessed through the Department. These documents include:

Implementing a District-wide standards-referenced assessment system (DSRAS)

Technical assistance manual for the DSRAS

Iowa Administrative Code General Accreditation requirements for Iowa schools and school districts 281—IAC 12 www.legis.state.ia/Rules/2002/iac/gnac/gnac941/gnac953/gna954.pdf

Iowa Alternate Assessment Manual www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/cfcs/idea/doc/iaaim.pdf

Iowa Alternate Assessment FAQ www.edinfo.state.ia.us/web/faqs.asp?f=alt0000

Participation in District-wide Assessments (technical assistance guide included in the Iowa IEP manual)

www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/cfcs/idea/doc/pda.pdf

Application Content and Scoring Criteria

I. Cover Sheet – REQUIRED (not scored)

The cover page is required and must contain all requested information. It should be the top page of the proposal.

II. Abstract – REQUIRED (not scored)

A brief one-page abstract should precede the detailed grant proposal. It should be presented in Times, 12-point font. The abstract should provide an overview of the information presented in the detailed grant proposal section.

III. Grant Proposal Section - REQUIRED (scored)

Participants need to learn about and apply concepts of alignment, validity, reliability, and fairness in a training session (workshop setting) and in the field (workplace setting). They need to be able to apply their knowledge to judge the alignment and technical adequacy of district assessment measures, make recommendations based on findings, and implement actions that will result in aligned, technically adequate assessment measures. Participants will need to be able to do this on an ongoing basis.

Proposals must include a narrative description of the activities proposed to meet the intended outcomes for planning, implementation, evaluation of, and follow-up to, training activities. The proposal must include descriptions of the following activities to achieve the intended outcomes specified. Grantees are encouraged to propose additional appropriate content and processes for consideration by proposal evaluators.

A. Description of the Training Process (60/300 points)

The applicant will be responsible for establishing an action plan for development of materials and training activities, implementation of training and evaluation activities. The Department has determined the following set of deadlines for the completion of activities:

Activity	Deadline
Complete training documents	November 2002
Finalize training arrangements	November 2002
Conduct training	January through May 2002
Complete evaluation of training and submit a	December 2003
project report	

The intended audience includes AEA and LEA staffs (including both assessment novices and experts) that are responsible for implementation of a process that will

lead to technically adequate district wide assessment, accountability, and evaluation systems. The Department will determine specific participants.

- 1. <u>Materials</u>. Considerations for materials must be aligned with the Title I and Title III specifically the <u>Peer Reviewer Guidance for Evaluating Evidence of Final Assessments Under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (see Additional Specifications Section). Materials used in the training and follow-up support may include written documents, electronic formats (including web-based, CDs or other technology.) Grantee is encouraged to utilize current materials that have been made available by the Department. (weighted 5)</u>
- 2. <u>Delivery Model</u>. The proposal will specify the training model, which must include theory, demonstration, practice, coaching and follow-up support to address the intended outcomes specified. (weighted 25)
- 3. <u>Selection of training sites</u>. Site selection for training will be made by the grantee and other expenses related to training must be incorporated into the budget of the bid proposal. (**weighted 5**)
- 4. <u>Ongoing support processes</u>. Grantee will provide information regarding how they intend to support the learning and application of understandings developed through the training, also considering integration of technology into the learning and application of participants. (weighted 25)

B. Evaluation (50/250 points)

1. Evaluation of training. Grantee will propose a plan to evaluate the extent to which participants have acquired the knowledge and understanding of the content delivered, and the extent to which they feel efficacious in applying their understanding in a field setting. Part of the design must include plans for additional support for participants who have not acquired the knowledge or skills sufficient to apply in a field setting. (weighted 50)

Additional Specifications

The materials and training need to enable LEAs and the State aggregate to satisfy the expectations imbedded in both Title I and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Materials and training must address the issues imbedded in the peer review guidance.

<u>Peer Reviewer Guidance for Evaluating Evidence of Final Assessments Under Title I of</u> the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (November, 1999)

I. Issues of Alignment

C1. How has the LEA ensured alignment of its standards & assessments?

C2. How has the LEA ensured that its assessment system reflects its content and performance standards in terms of **comprehensiveness** and **emphasis**?

- **C3**. How has the LEA ensured that its assessment reflects its content and performance standards in terms of **depth** and **match with performance standards**?
- **C4.** How clearly has the LEA identified any gaps or weaknesses and what is it doing to improve the alignment of its assessment and standards?
- **C5.** If the LEA system consists of several assessments or draws upon assessment data from several sources, is there a coherent design that shows how all the standards are assessed?
- **C6.** How is the alignment of the assessment and the standards communicated? Is it clear to educators and parents what is being assessed and how it relates to the standards?

II. Issues of Technical Adequacy

D1. How has the LEA considered the issue of **validity** (in addition to the alignment) and taken steps to ascertain that the assessments are measuring the knowledge and skills described in the standards-and that the interpretations are appropriate?

Has the LEA specified the purposes for the assessments, delineating the types of uses and decisions most appropriate to each?

- **D2.** How comprehensively has the LEA determined that its assessments provide consistent and **reliable** results for individual students and schools?
- **D3.** What steps has the LEA taken steps to ensure the **fairness and accessibility** of the assessments?
- **D4.** How are **multiple measures** used to meet the criteria of validity, reliability, and fairness?
- **D6.** What evidence does the LEA have that its **administration**, **scoring**, **analysis**, **and reporting** procedures consistently meet high technical standards?
- **D7.** What actions has the LEA taken to ensure that teachers, other educators, and parents properly interpret and use the results?
- **D8.** What steps is the LEA taking to periodically **review and improve** its assessments?

Additional Consideration (not scored)

The grantee may consider aligning the materials and training to the AERA/APA/NCME Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999), to the extent that these materials can be operationalized and implemented by LEAs.

Section	Standards
Validity	1.1 - 1.24
Reliability & Errors of Measurement	2.1 - 2.20
Test Development & Revision	3.1 - 3.27
Scales, Norms, & Score Comparability	4.1 – 4.21
Test Administration, Scoring, & Reporting	5.1 – 5.16
Supporting Documentation for Tests	6.1 - 6.15

Fairness in Testing and Test Use	7.1 - 7.12
Testing Individuals of Diverse Linguistic Backgrounds	9.1 – 9.11
Testing Individuals with Disabilities	10.1 – 10.12

Budget – REQUIRED (20/100points)

The budget section is required and must contain the proposed budget for the use of funds during the grant period covered in the proposal. The budget section must include the Applicant's cost proposal for the work set forth in the Grant Proposal Section.

A. Line items:

	Budgeted Costs
Personnel (Include # of FTEs)	
Fringe benefits	
Subcontracts (if any)	
Travel & per diem/ grantee personnel	
Travel & per diem/ participant	
Training site costs/ accommodations (i.e. meals,	
AV equipment, etc.)	
Material Development & Dissemination	
Technical Assistance (ongoing support process)	
Evaluation of training	
Supplies (i.e. supplies needed for training)	
Other (specify)	
Total cost	

- This grant does not provide funds for indirect costs.
 - B. Narrative section: The budget narrative section should be no more than five (5) pages in length, and may be single-spaced with one-inch margins. Font size must be a minimum of 12-point, Times font.
 - Describe how all budget items were determined
 - Describe how all budget items related to achieving the proposed activities

Timeline – REQUIRED (not scored)

The Applicant will provide a detailed timeline for completion of the activities specified above. The Department has determined the following deadlines:

Activity	Deadline
Complete training documents	November 2002
Finalize training arrangements	November 2002
Conduct training	January through May 2002
Complete evaluation of training and submit a	December 2003
project report	

VI. ASSURANCES – REQUIRED (10/50 points)

- A. Quality of Project Personnel
 - The applicant should describe the backgrounds and roles of persons who will design and provide the services specified in this proposal. The Department reserves the right to negotiate activities and persons assigned to complete these activities.
- B. Credentials of applicant organization (evidence of ability to complete the project)
- C. Evidence of willingness of applicant to enter into a collaborative arrangement with the Department
- D. Compliance assurances
 - Nondiscrimination the applicant assures that in carrying out the activities
 within this grant that it will comply with federal and state laws which prohibit
 discrimination on the basis of gender, race, national origin, disability, age, and
 religion in educational programs. Multicultural, gender-fair approaches will
 be used in planning and implementing these activities.
 - Control of funds The applicant organization assures that it assumes responsibility for the control of funds received under this grant. It is acceptable to subcontract with another agency for fiscal management of the grant funds.
 - Fiscal control and accounting procedures The organization assures that it will make reports when requested by the state fiscal agent, maintain records and provide access to those records when requested by the state fiscal agent, and maintain all supporting documentation of the status and results of the initiative for up to three years following completion of the grant award.
 - Program Accountability The grant program manager or fiscal agent is responsible to notify them immediately any time a deviation occurs or necessity arises to alter any of the goals, program elements, budget, or other sections specified in this grant application.

It is the policy of the Department not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age or marital status in its programs or employment practices. If you have questions or grievances related to this policy, please contact Jeanette McGreevy, Chief, Bureau of Administration and School Improvement Services, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, (515) 281-5811.

Scoring

The scoring rubric defines the level of quality evidenced in the proposal. The value (5, 3, or 1) of the rubric is multiplied against the weighting given in parenthesis for each criterion. The total score or number of points is determined by adding each of those scores together. Total possible weighting (#) and points (#) are given for each general section, with weighting and points assigned and calculated for each criterion. The total application points possible are **700 points**. The total number of points possible is based on the weighting multiplied by the highest rubric value or 5. The criteria and the rubric in this document are the same used by reviewers to score applications.

Scoring Rubric

- 5- All criteria in the category are comprehensively addressed in the written description of performance in this area. The evidence included is detailed and thorough with information that clearly substantiates effective practice and proposed results.
- **3** Most of the criteria in the category are addressed in the written description for this area. The evidence that is included adequately indicates effective practice and proposed results.
- 1- Few or none of the criteria in the category are adequately addressed in the written description for this area. Little evidence to support and indicate effective practice and proposed results is present.

Appendices/attachments

Additional materials, such as appendices or other attachments, are not required from the applicant. Reviewers will not be required to read any that may be included. An applicant should be sure to include all pertinent evidence and information in the required portions of the application.

Appeal of grant denial or termination

APPEAL PROCESS

Any applicant of Iowa's *Improving District Wide Assessments* grant funds may appeal the denial of a properly submitted competitive program grant application or the unilateral termination of a competitive program grant to the director of Department. Appeals must be in writing and received within ten working days of the date of notice of the decision and must be based on a contention that the process was conducted outside of statutory authority; violated state or federal law, policy or rule; did not provide adequate public notice; was altered without adequate public notice; or involved conflict of interest by staff or committee members. Refer to 281 IAC r. 7.5, the legal authority for this process.

Grant	no.	
Grant	110.	

2002

Technical Assistance To Determine Quality And Alignment of District Wide Assessment Measures Grant Cover Sheet Please type

Vendor Name:		
Signature		
Phone No	Fax No	e-mail
Address		
Facilitator or Grapplication)	ant Contact Person (the person	son who can answer questions about thi
Address		
e-mail	Phone N	0
	d to sign a contract (type)	
Address		

Deadlines: June 24, 2002, by 4:30 PM FAX not accepted

Mail or Deliver to:

Kathy Hinders Iowa Department of Education Grimes State Office Building Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146 **Grant Number:** Readers:

Scoring Sheet

Items Scored	Weight	Rubric Value	Value(Wght)
Description of the Training Process:			
Materials Delivery Model Selection of Training Sites Ongoing Support Processes	5 25 5 25		
Comments:			
Evaluation: Evaluation of Training Comments:	50		
Budget Comments:	20		
Assurances	10		
Comments:			
Total Points Awarded			
Comments:			